

Southwest Region/Iron County CIQA Meeting September 16, 2008

Present: Douglas Spencer, John Shrum, Destry Maycock, Mark Hollingshead, Amy Bates, Stephanie Furnival, Joanna Batt, George Taylor, Mark Yahne, Annie VanYperen and Debbie Jewkes

Excused: Shandra Powell, Amber Perkins and Diane Gitz

Destry introduced George Taylor from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group and welcomed him to our meeting. George is responsible to oversee the Division's compliance with the settlement and exit agreements.

Destry is acting chairperson for today's meeting. Destry reviewed the minutes from the September 16, 2008 meeting; there is one correction to be made. The minutes are corrected to state that Annie talked about BACA support with visitation instead of Joanna.

Mark Yahne, Color Country Chapter of BACA representative, was in attendance and was welcomed to the meeting. As a result of the last CIQA meeting, Mark will be attending future CIQA meetings. Destry briefly outlined the purpose of the CIQA meetings for Mark and thanked him for his attendance. The committee is looking forward to Mark's insight that he is able to provide.

Upcoming Events:

CJC will be hosting the **Fetal Exposure Training** on September 18, 2008 from 9:00 to 12:00 pm; lunch will be provided. Mark and Destry will be attending the training; they plan to be excused from SWLT for a short period of time that day.

The **National DEC Conference** will be held October 6th – October 8th, 2008. Several committee members will be attending.

Prevent Child Abuse Utah – Committee members were encourage to attend; a website it provided at the bottom of the agency for enrollment purposes.

State QIC Summit will be held November 25, 2008 at the Salt Lake City Radisson Hotel. Last year, Debbie Davis attended and reported that the summit was very worthwhile. Everyone is invited to attend; accommodations and per

dium are available payable by the State. Destry provided a copy of an email he received from Kerri Burns. In the email, Kerri requested that the CIQA committee discuss the topics and information that would be beneficial for the next summit; she welcomed suggestions from everyone. Destry reminded everyone that the purpose of the QIC committee is to review data and provide recommendations back to agencies. The feedback that Kerri is looking for will be strictly for issues pertaining to QIC committees statewide. Doug stated that panels have been offered previously and he found them to be very useful. The panels provided discussion as to how things were working in QIC; Southwest Region talked about what CIQA was doing and feedback was given as to what is working.

Following a brief discussion, the following suggestions were made to provide to Kerri:

- Panels to determine how things are working within the QIC committees with possible open discussion.
- Doug suggested that the summit provide an opportunity for all QIC committee chairpersons to be recognized for the time and effort they put in to their committees. Many hours are donated on the state level and individually.

Destry informed everyone that Sterling expressed appreciation to him for the journal and the thought behind it. Evidently, Sterling is an avid journal writer; he has written in his journal(s) every day since 1977. He was very appreciative of the gift.

Meth and Families Conference – The Meth and Families Conference was held September 13, 2008 at the Heritage Center in Cedar City. Destry obtained packets from the conference for those committee members who were unable to attend. He reported that he enjoyed the conference and a lot of good information was shared. Both Annie and Destry talked about Dr. Hansen's presentation. Dr. Hansen is a professor at the University of Utah; he discussed the use of meth and other drugs and their affect on the brain. The majority of participants were family members of people who are recovering from meth or have recovered. DCFS and child welfare partners were among the minority in attendance. Annie said that it was encouraging for those who work with children to know that the thought of brain pathways and neuro connections can be repaired and healed, but it is a long process with family support and others involved with that person. She now knows that there is hope for recovery; however, the physical symptoms don't go away for a while. Utah is ranked third in the nation for meth addiction. However, Utah is lowest for alcohol, nicotine, heroin and other drugs; attendees found this information interesting. Doug shared that there is a connection between Parkinson's disease and meth use. Annie talked about the "pleasure" part of the brain that is affected by meth and

cocaine use. An example that Dr. Hansen gave was a football player; when the player is using cocaine, it is like winning the super bowl every night and it takes a long time to get that part of your brain where it should be. Annie thanked Destry and Doug for setting up the conference to be held in Cedar City.

Action Plan follow up and planning:

- Amy has contacted the Spectrum; they are interested in writing an article about the National Adoption month.
- Annie and a CJC staff member plan to attend the National DEC.

Casworker recognition/rention/workload reduction:

At the last meeting, Joanna reminded everyone about the Limelight training and how to use the program to improve worker status. She feels that the program could be used to better recognize staff member and retain them as workers longer. Destry displayed a copy of a coupon that was located on the Limelight website that could be used to provide staff with an hour of administrative leave. Joanna uses a different coupon, but it's all the same concept. Destry is planning to make Lori aware of the Limelight program and request permission for DCFS supervisors and administration to use it. Destry encourages outside agencies to provide information to supervisors regarding exceptional work that they observe from DCFS workers. The group provided some recent example of good work they or their staff had noticed DCFS workers performing.

Parental Visitation: Supervised Visitation was again discussed. Doug stated that there is a huge need for supervised visitation assistance for children in foster care. Over the last month, 25 children have come into care in Cedar City. This has created a lot of extra work, which includes shuttling children to and from visits, to school and other appointments they are required to attend. He has noticed a difference with casework getting backed up. He has also noticed some fatigue and the effects of the extra work when the caseload is substantial. Destry talked briefly about the assistance that DCFS received through the Family Support Center during the past 18 months, that assistance ended in June 2008. Efforts continue to obtain funding for this need. Destry recommended that we check with CASA representatives, BACA and SUU to see if there is assistance they could provide. Mark Hollingshead reminded everyone that anyone who assists with supervised visitation is required to pass a background check. Mark Yahne said that all BACA individuals also are required to have a background check. Doug is willing to work with Mark Yahne through the process for approval. Once approvals are received, DCFS would benefit from BACA services. Mark will bring this topic to the next chapter meeting and report back at the next CIQA meeting. DCFS has their own standard for supervised visitation; however, the Guardian ad Litem approves persons and/or organizations as well.

Foster Parent Recognition/Retention: Doug and members of his staff attended the Iron County Cluster BBQ at the park on September 8, 2008. Doug reported that the barbeque was great and it was a good opportunity for foster parents to associate with one another as well as caseworkers that they work with often. Amy stated that they appreciated DCFS support. Doug recognizes the value of the feedback from foster parents to DCFS and vice versa. The Southwest Region is currently in the process of establishing some training that includes both foster parents and caseworkers to bring them together. It is needed because the relationship needs to be established and caseworkers shouldn't just see foster parents as a resource.

Parental Substance Abuse: Our team has recommended that the State consider adding Drug Endangered Child as an allegation for which a CPS worker can make a finding. Right now, substance abuse is identified as Neglect, Child Endangerment, or Dependency so it makes it difficult to collect the data although it can be identified as a contributing factor. This issue is somewhat difficult because substance abuse is a very broad subject. Substance abuse can include different prescription and illegal drugs or alcohol.

Annie requested clarification involving substance abuse becoming it's own allegation. She would like to be included with the information because there are a lot of questions regarding children who are subjected to substance abuse and the negative affect it has on them.

Discussion:

CPS Overdues: Destry provided data to review, which outlines how Iron County DCFS has improved regarding closure of CPS cases and overdues. The reports were reviewed month by month; Mark Hollingshead stated that he has had personnel issues but feels that they are resolved and his CPS team is doing an exceptional job! It was noticed that overdues were trending downward over the past six months. Mark is proud of his team; he will report back to CIQA when he received approval for recognition of the excellent work his team has shown the last few months. One of the goals has been to improve the professionalism and improve relationship with the community; the workers are doing a great job with passion and certainly accomplishing this goal. Stephanie has noticed the teamwork as well. Doug has noticed the teamwork with Mark's team bleed over to his foster care team as well.

CPS Extension: CPS extension data was reviewed. Many cps extensions are necessary due to waiting for law enforcement and new allegations that arise during the course of the investigation. There are other various reasons for an extension; child was and/or is out of the state, caseworker is in the process of setting up services for the family and other elements that are required prior to

closing a CPS investigation. CJC directors have spoken to Darren Burdette because there are some CPS offices that will not allow extensions for law enforcement. Darren is in the process of looking into that concern; Darren did report to CJC that there are more offices that do allow extensions than not. Darren is also in the process of working on some type of an alert to let the worker know that the case is due to be closed soon. Destry suggested using the "delayed emails" option in GroupWise; it has always worked well for him. Documentation, which outlines the percent of CPS investigations supported and percent of support cases by allegation type, was reviewed and discussed.

Quarterly Report Data for Southwest Region: (documentation provided)

Mark Hollingshead noticed that the percentage of unaccepted cases vs. referrals received was consistent. Stephanie requested that we review this report outside of the meeting and discuss our observations at our next meeting. The team agreed.

Destry thanked everyone for his or her attendance and input today. The next CIQA meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2008.